Revision of basic minimum wages in A.P.

2300. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in Andhra Pradesh the basic minimum wages of unskilled workers has not been revised since 1993 ignoring the inflation and other factors;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons cited by the State Government for non-revision of minimum wages in the State; and

(c) the remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) As per information available, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has revised the minimum wages in most of the scheduled employment after 1993. the Government of Andhra Pradesh has also introduced Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA), linked to Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the industrial workers, **in** order to protect the wages against inflation.

(c) Under the provisions of Minimum Wages Act, 1948, both Central and the State Governments are the appropriate Government to fix, revise and enforce minimum wages in their respective jurisdictions. The Central Government has been advising the State Governments to revise the minimum wages at regular intervals and also adopt VDA linked to CPI as a component of minimum wages.

Disinvestment of Baico and Modern Foods

2301. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he has been directed by the Prime Minister to constitute a Committee to find out whether there is a difference of facts given by Government and the trade unions relating to conditions of disinvested companies like BALCO and Modern Foods;

(b) if so, what are the terms of reference and whether this exercise would be confined to only these two companies or similarly place other disinvested companies; and

(c) what is the time-frame for submission of the Report of this Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) During the meeting of the Hon'ble Prime Minister with the Central Trade Unions on 18th October, 2002, some of the trade union leaders had raised the issue of condition of workers in disinvested companies such as BALCO and Modern Foods. In view of this, a team of officials is proposed to be sent to assess the impact of disinvestment on labour in BALCO and Modern Foods.

EPF subscribers

2302. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of EPF subscribers in the country; and

(b) what steps have been taken to ensure early settlement of their claims?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) As on 31.3.2002, there were 274.18 lakh Employees Provident Fund subscribers in the country.

(b) The Central Board of Trustees (Employees Provident Fund) has approved in October 2002, a modernization programme, namely 'Reinventing Employees Provident Fund-India' which will enable the subscribers to access their accounts and file their claims from any of the EPF offices as against the present system which limits them only to one office, where they are registered. This would substantially reduce the time between receipt of claim and issue of cheque.

Employment scenario

2303. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:
SHRI R G. NARAYANAN:
SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of unemployment problem indicating the number of unemployed, both educated and uneducated. State-wise and the manpower planning made in this regard; and